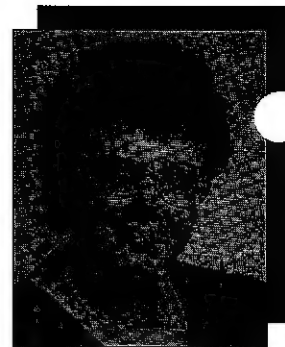


Certification Corner

Sharing the Commitment to National Certification

by Joanne P. Mc Lees, Chair
National Certification Board for
Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork



In the fall of 1992, the National Certification Council, chaired by George Kousaleos, bid its farewell. In its place, the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) was formed as an administratively independent affiliate of the American Massage Therapy Association. Eight elected board members now govern the National Certification Program.

After the NCBTMB met in San Antonio, December 10-14, 1992, I called my 87 year old Aunt Katie (who exudes wisdom and curiosity) in Florida to tell her of my new commitment. She politely put me through a questionnaire that any of you might have assembled in order to learn the mission, purpose, structure, process, benefits, resources and impact of National Certification on our "neighbors" in health care and our consumers.

Eventually she asked, "How much are they paying you?" (I'm a volunteer) followed by "Does this mean you won't come to see me for three years?" (the length of my board term).

Just as you need to know how National Certification affects you, Aunt Katie needed to measure its impact on her in personal terms. After all her questions were answered, she said, "This is a wonderful thing, isn't it? Tell me, what can I do to help?"

Aunt Katie has taken a leap of faith. She knows a "good thing" and the value of two-way communication. She invited herself into the process and will be a great help. So can you, by sharing

in the commitment to National Certification.

The Challenge

In 1992, the two National Certification Examinations (NCE's) resulted in 2,098 certificants. But applicant participation involves more than just sitting for a test. In addition to the study required to pass the NCE, you must meet the eligibility standards for training and experience, make assurances that you'll abide by a code of ethics and agree to follow rules and procedures.

The process of certification does not take place in a vacuum. A National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) approves certification programs that voluntarily meet established criteria and standards. In other words, this is the body that certifies the certifiers for a variety of occupations across the United States. One aim of the NCBTMB is to receive NCCA approval for our program. Applying for such certification is no simple task.

Governance, financing and staff support must all be in compliance, insuring that our entire proposal is soundly based. The program components being developed to meet NCCA criteria and our awareness that we must remain relevant to our profession, our neighbors in health care and our consumers will provide many challenges as we proceed.

The NCE represents an enormous achievement accomplished by those who've shared in the commitment to certification to date. To our supporters, our certificants, those who've worked

so hard to make the dream a reality, and those who plan to be involved in the job ahead of us, thank you.

Sharing and Commitment

As Aunt Katie demonstrated, sharing not only implies getting your portion, it also means giving to others, so that all may participate. Commitment can involve either entrusting a process to the safekeeping of others or actively engaging in events which shape your life.

We invite you to share in our mission and goals:

Mission Statement

The NCBTMB promotes professionalism by creating and maintaining standards of competency in the field. Our heartfelt commitment is to unity in service while honoring diversity.

Purpose (excerpted from Bylaws)

The primary purpose of the NCBTMB is the evaluation of those individuals who wish to enter, continue and/or advance in the profession of therapeutic massage and bodywork through the certification process, and the issuance of credentials to those individuals who meet the required level of competence.

Even if you cannot participate on a national level, we want to hear from you. We may not be able to write a personal reply, but we will listen and take notice. Our hope is to create a community of volunteers who share a commitment to National Certification. Your energy, competence, ambition, reason and patience will be needed as together we remain focused on success. ♦